

Inyo-Mono IRWMP Round 1 Project Implementation Application

Attachment 11. Program Preferences

The Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan and its associated projects present a solid first step towards advancing many of the required Program Preferences as described in Section II.F of the Department of Water Resources' IRWMP Grant Program Guidelines. Moreover, the Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan process has been developed and implemented taking into consideration, from the onset, these Guidelines and is consistent with the intent of the Proposition 84 IRWMP Grant Program: to encourage integrated regional strategies for management of water resources and to provide funding for projects that protect communities from drought, protect and improve water quality, and improve local water security by reducing dependency on imported water.

Statewide priorities as developed through the IRWM Program as well as those discussed in the California Water Plan Updates have been considered in crafting the IRWM Plan. The Inyo-Mono Regional Water Management Group (IM-RWMG) recognizes that the major water-related issues in the Inyo-Mono planning region fall well within several of the State Water Plan and Prop. 84 priorities and, accordingly, the statewide guidance have been used in the development of the group's objectives and strategies as presented in Chapter 6 of the Plan (Goals, Objectives, and Resource Management Strategies).

While the Plan significantly advances regional cooperation, understanding of complex watershed related issues and activities aimed at addressing critical water-related challenges, additional future planning and on-the-ground work is needed. Knowing this, the IM-RWMG has applied for a Round 1 Proposition 84 Planning Grant with the intention of updating this initial Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan to refine the objectives and strategies as well as the project review process. By doing so, the IM-RWMG will ensure that the IRWM Plan continues to support the overall Program Preferences and furthers resolution of significant water-related conflicts within or between relevant hydrologic regions.

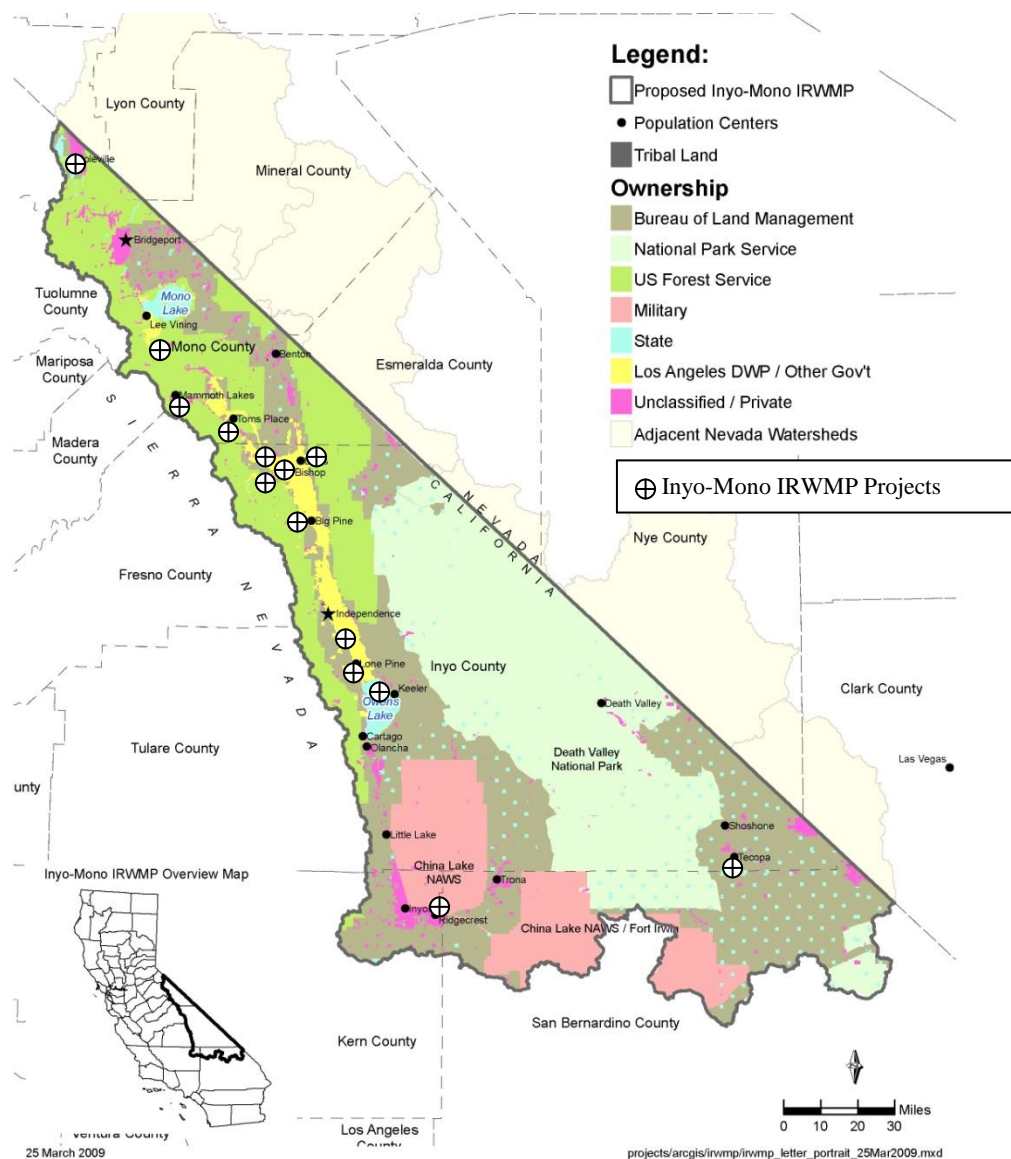
Understanding that successful attainment of the identified Program Preferences is a condition of any grant agreement DWR awards, the IRWM Plan presents fifteen proposed projects that have been thoroughly reviewed and screened against criteria that were established specific to Proposition 84 requirements, the California State Water Plan 2009 objectives, and the identified regional water and ecosystem related needs as identified through the extensive outreach efforts undertaken so far. These project proposals have been developed through an iterative process which included enabling project proponents to submit pre-proposals and to work with IRWM Plan staff to refine and complete their proposals. The completed proposals were then screened against clearly articulated eligibility criteria, and those projects deemed eligible were asked for additional project information that would then be used to determine which project proposals would be approved by the RWMG and submitted to DWR.

The final set of fifteen projects included herein addresses the Program Preferences in the following ways:

- *Include regional projects or programs.*
 - Several of the proposed projects will positively impact multiple communities throughout the planning region. These include addressing antiquated

infrastructure for multiple communities in Inyo County, planning projects that will ultimately assist disadvantage communities in dire need of potable water, and one project that will continue to address the prolific threat of invasive species and thereby improve watershed health throughout the planning region. The Inyo-Mono IRWMP Round 1 Project Implementation Application also includes two projects that will directly improve the water quality and water supply reliability for schools. As shown in the figure below, proposed projects span the range of the planning region. While some projects are site specific and serve a relatively small number of individuals, others are more regional in scope. All told, the projects included in this first implementation application cover a very wide geographic range and go far in demonstrating that collaborative planning can make a difference.

Figure 1. Location of Proposed Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan Projects



- *Effectively integrate water management programs and projects within a hydrologic region identified in the California Water Plan; the Regional Water Quality Control Board region or subdivision; or other region or sub-region specifically identified by DWR*
 - The IRWM Plan includes proposed projects from a variety of groups including Inyo County, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, the Eastern Sierra Unified School District, a number of community service and water districts, a public utility district and a non-profit. All of these projects are within the Lahontan Region and are in support of the various statewide priorities. As evidenced from the long list of 86 additional projects presented in Attachment E of the Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan, there are many more projects that are still in the conceptual stages that are worthy of further consideration. Undoubtedly there are even more potential projects that will be identified as future outreach efforts are undertaken as part of the IRWM Plan revision process and the IM-RWMG understands that more work will be needed to ensure increased conformity with this Program Preference.
- *Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions*
 - Although no projects being submitted for this round of funding directly aim to reduce water-related conflict within the planning region, many of the projects would help water managers ensure more intelligent and efficient use of water, thereby potentially reducing confrontations over limited water resources. Moreover, implementing the Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan will continue to develop and facilitate stronger relationships amongst stakeholders that have had a history of water conflicts in the region. The relationship building and sharing of information that is occurring as part of the IRWM planning process is unprecedented in the Inyo-Mono region, and continued support of this effort will aid in finding shared understanding of the water-related issues facing the region and, more importantly, develop agreement on how to address critical resource challenges.
- *Contribute to attainment of one or more of the objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program.*
 - The Inyo-Mono Planning Region is outside of the geographic scope of the CALFED Bay-Delta region and, thus, this preference is not relevant.
- *Address critical water supply or water quality needs of disadvantaged communities within the region.*
 - Four of the proposed projects within this IRWM Plan directly address critical water supply and water quality needs of disadvantaged communities within the region:
 1. Safe Drinking Water Study for Tecopa, CA
 2. Pump Operation Redundancy and SCADA Improvements
 3. Lone Pine and Laws Tank Project
 4. Lone Pine, Independence, and Laws Water Meter project

More information on the specific benefits that each proposed project will provide to its associated disadvantaged community(ies) is provided in Attachment 13. It is important to note that much of the entire planning area is economically challenged as Inyo County includes eleven communities that qualify as disadvantaged while Mono County includes four communities. The portion of Kern County included in the planning region includes one disadvantaged community. The communities of Darwin and Tecopa, both in Inyo County, have median household incomes below the federal poverty level. Thus, this initial set of proposed projects is a solid start towards meeting the intent of this Program

Preference and a number of communities will benefit substantially from project implementation.

Proposals from three Native American Indian Tribes were submitted for the initial rounds of project evaluation that took place within the RWMG. All three projects were highly ranked by the Group. Unfortunately, none of the three Tribes were able to complete the full project proposal due to lack of resources. Assisting Tribes and disadvantaged communities with technical issues and proposal writing is clearly a significant need in the Inyo-Mono planning region. Funds have been requested through the Prop. 84 Planning Grant to help provide these resources to Tribes and DACs for future rounds of implementation funding.

- *Effectively integrate water management with land use planning.*
 - The Inyo/Mono Watersheds Invasive Weed Control Project supports an ongoing program to remove invasive plants in many areas throughout the region. Removing invasives is important for protecting water quality and water supply reliability. This project represents a first step at integrated water and land use planning through the Inyo-Mono IRWM program and will serve as a solid example of what can be accomplished during future outreach efforts.
- *For eligible SWFM funding, projects which: a) are not receiving State funding for flood control or flood prevention projects pursuant to PRC §5096.824 or §75034 or b) provide multiple benefits, including, but not limited to, water quality improvements, ecosystem benefits, reduction of instream erosion and sedimentation, and groundwater recharge.*
 - The Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan does not include any projects eligible for SWFM funding and, thus, this preference is not relevant.
- *Address Statewide priorities.*
 - To help reviewers understand the degree to which the Inyo-Mono IRWM Plan addresses the statewide priorities as identified by the IRWM Grant Program, the following table is presented. A dot indicates which projects meet the stated eight statewide priorities. All proposed projects help ensure equitable distribution of benefits by increasing participation of small and disadvantaged communities in the overall IRWM process. Moreover, many projects address safe drinking water and wastewater needs of financially challenged areas. Additionally, most projects both address climate change needs and water use efficiency in a number of different ways. A number of projects also help improve groundwater use and management while also instituting actions that will result in long-term reductions in water use. A fewer number of projects have direct environmental stewardship benefits at this time, but future IRWM Plan revision efforts will work to identify and include additional stewardship proposals as well as projects on Tribal lands.

Table 1: Project Conformance with Statewide Priorities. Please see Attachment 3 (Work Plan) for a list of project proposal names.

Statewide Priority	Proposed Project #														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<i>Drought Preparedness</i>			•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		
<i>Use and Reuse Water More Efficiently</i>			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
<i>Climate Change Response Actions</i>		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•
<i>Expand Environmental Stewardship</i>							•				•		•	•	•
<i>Practice Integrated Flood Management</i>															•
<i>Protect Surface Water and Groundwater Quality</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
<i>Improve Tribal Water and Natural Resources</i>														•	
<i>Ensure Equitable Distribution of Benefits</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•